

[DH closely monitors a MERS case in Korea](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (September 9) closely monitoring an imported case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by Korea, and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit.

According to the WHO, the case involves a 61-year-old male patient, who travelled to Kuwait for business between August 16 and September 6. The patient was hospitalised with fever, diarrhoea and respiratory symptoms shortly after returning to Korea and is currently receiving treatment in isolation.

According to the WHO, this is the first MERS case detected in Korea since the end of the outbreak in 2015.

"We will maintain close communication with the WHO and the health authority of Korea," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance mechanism with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Suspected cases identified will be sent to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS Coronavirus.

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus," the spokesman said.

The Hajj pilgrimage ended in late August. If pilgrims feel unwell during the two weeks after returning to Hong Kong, they should wear a surgical mask and seek medical attention immediately and inform a doctor of their recent travel history, including transit.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS page of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the WHO's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).